

J U L Y

2023



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## USEFUL NUMBERS

**Steyning Library:**  
Opening Hours: Monday - Friday: 10:00 - 17:00  
Saturday: 10:00 - 14:00  
E: [steyning.library@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:steyning.library@westsussex.gov.uk)  
T: 01903 270330

**Steyning Minibus:**  
0300 772 7735  
[www.westsussexminibus.org.uk/organisation/](http://www.westsussexminibus.org.uk/organisation/)

**Rural Henfield & Steyning Children & Family Centre**  
Cowfold Village Hall,  
Bolney Road,  
Cowfold RH13 8AA  
01403 864668

**The Steyning Health Centre:**  
Tanyard Lane, Steyning, BN44 3RJ  
Telephone Appointments: 01903 497227  
When surgery closed dial new NHS 111 service  
**Surgery Hours:**  
Mon: 08:00 - 18:30 Tues 07:00 - 18:30  
Wed 08:00 - 20:00 Thur 08:00 - 20:00  
Fri 08:00 - 18:30 Sat and Sun: Closed

**Steyning & District Good Neighbours Association:**  
T: 01903 816181  
[steyninggoodneighbours.co.uk](http://steyninggoodneighbours.co.uk)

**Steyning Parish Council:**  
[www.steyningpc.gov.uk](http://www.steyningpc.gov.uk)  
T: 01903 812042  
E: [clerk@steyningpc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@steyningpc.gov.uk)

**The Steyning Centre:**  
[www.steyningcentre@btconnect.com](http://www.steyningcentre@btconnect.com)  
T: 01903 812042  
Opening Hours: 09:00 to 16:00  
The Steyning Centre, Fletcher's Croft, Steyning

**Community Matters** will be delivered to your inbox each month giving you a sneak preview to the printed magazine.

For up-to-date news and information about what's going on visit our  
W: [www.yourmag.co.uk](http://www.yourmag.co.uk) - Subscribe to our mailing list: [www.yourmag.co.uk](http://www.yourmag.co.uk)



## Henfield Theatre Company presents: A Midsummer Night's Dream

Theatre Company are excited to announce that their next summer production, will be an open-air production of Shakespeare's best loved comedy, A Midsummer Night's Dream, in The Sussex Prairie Garden, Wheatsheaf Road, Henfield.

A hilarious play of order and disorder, reality and appearance, and love and marriage.

Set in Athens on a Midsummer night, four young lovers find themselves wrapped in the dream-like arms of an enchanted forest where sprites lurk and fairies rule.

While the Fairy King and Queen bicker, their paths are crossed by Bottom, Quince and their workmates rehearsing a play within a play. Chief mischief-maker Puck is on hand to ensure that the course of true love is

anything but smooth and that everything comes right in the end!

Directed by Peter Ingledew, the cast and crew will be aiming to provide you with an evening of love, magic, chaos and fun in an enchanted setting.

The Sussex Prairie Garden hosts many artistic and cultural events throughout the year, and Henfield Theatre Company is honoured to be the first amateur theatre company to

have the opportunity of presenting a production in this beautiful setting. Our sincere thanks to Paul and Pauline McBride for this wonderful opportunity and for allowing us into their Garden.

Kindly sponsored by Andy Blunden Ceramic Wall & Floor Tilers Ltd, performances are on 7th, 8th and 9th July at 19:30. Tickets costing £17.50 per person are now on sale via [www.henfieldtheatrecompany.com](http://www.henfieldtheatrecompany.com), and at Steven's Estate Agents in Henfield High Street.

The ticket price also gives you entry to the gardens from 18:00 (normal single day entry fee to the gardens is £10).

Why not bring a picnic and have time to enjoy the beautiful surroundings?

Tea, coffee, cake and ice-cream will be available and there will be numbered seating provided for the performances. And don't forget a cushion and a torch!



## The Vintage Revival was a runaway success

A steady crowd of people visiting the High Street enjoying all that was on offer. There was a superb selection of vintage vehicles, great music, street entertainment and the atmosphere was fantastic – oh, and the sun shone!





## Southdown, Steyning's community nursery, is judged outstanding by Ofsted

*'Children flourish in this outstanding, nurturing nursery' Ofsted 2023*

Anyone familiar with Southdown Nursery will know it's a special place at the heart of Steyning. The community nursery offers a friendly, nurturing environment where pre-schoolers can learn and play supported by a team of forest school trained staff – safe within a large, secure outdoor area that features a sensory garden and vegetable patch.

As a community nursery, Southdown runs on limited funds and relies heavily on the local community to support its work through vital fundraising events, and the staff at Southdown have always gone above and beyond to make sure that the children receive the very best of care...

And now all of their hard work has been rewarded as Ofsted has judged Southdown outstanding – the highest possible rating that can be awarded by the educational inspection body.

The Ofsted report noted that, *'Children and staff have developed wonderful relationships*

*that help children feel exceptionally safe and secure. Children are extremely enthusiastic to come into the nursery [and] staff's enthusiasm and encouragement allow children to be engaged and eager to try new resources and tools to further enhance their skills and make way for their excitement to really be present.'*

The Southdown team are delighted with their achievement and are proud to announce the result of their inspection to the community. Nursery Manager, Lucy Smith, said *'I am so proud of all my team, it is an honour and a privilege to be the manager of such a special setting. It has meant the world to us that our dedication and practitioner skills have been recognised as we develop an adapt in this post pandemic, early years crisis'*.

**There are still places available for new starters in September 2023.**

**Visit [www.southdownnursery.co.uk](http://www.southdownnursery.co.uk) or call 01903 814581 for further information and details on how to enrol your child.**



## Weed or wildflower?

Whether you take pride in manicured lawns, or revel in the idea of 'No Mow May', how do you decide whether the small plant growing amongst the blades of grass is a weed or a wildflower?

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, wildflowers are *'any flowers that grow without having been planted by people'*, however I would adjust that to any flowering plant, but perhaps that's semantics. Weeds



on the other hand are defined as *'any wild plant that grows in an unwanted place, especially in a garden or field where it prevents the cultivated plants from growing freely'*.

So why am I talking about this? Well, Greening Steyning's Life on the Verge project aims to increase the diversity of plants, specifically focusing on wildflowers, on our verges. The currently unused spaces along our roads could be home to cowslips, yarrow, orchids and many other plants which form the basis of our local food chain.

Pollinating and plant-eating insects rely on diversity to survive, grass alone will not sustain them. In turn they pollinate our gardens and allotments and support a host of bird and mammal species including hedgehogs and bats which we are privileged enough to live alongside.



At first these verges might look a little untidy and covered in plants that may, in other circumstances, be called weeds. However, over time they will start to develop, with new and interesting flowering plants appearing.

We will achieve this long-term change, very simply, by reducing how often the verges are cut, to once, possibly twice a year, and removing the cuttings when they are cut. This will reduce the fertility of the soil which will then support wildflower growth and start to limit the grass.

To have a look at the projects we have started, please visit the top of Shooting Fields in Steyning (by the Church) and the corner of Bramber roundabout at the bottom of Clays Hill. It is early days, but, in the end, we hope to have verges that bring wildflowers, butterflies and bees into the heart of our community.

You can get involved by writing to the county or parish councils and supporting the project or, if you can spare a few hours over the course of the summer and would like to get more practically involved, please do get in touch: [lifeontheverge@greeningsteyning.org](mailto:lifeontheverge@greeningsteyning.org).

**We are also happy to discuss new verge projects in your area if you and your neighbours are interested.**







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## July Steyning Community Orchard.

Our orchards are now thriving after a cold winter, wet early Spring and now warm sunshine. Almost perfect conditions for fruit trees. The blossom has been spectacular on most of our trees, but worryingly, several trees have hardly set any fruit at all.



These seem to be those that depend on being cross pollinated (some varieties self-pollinate), and during the 10 days they were flowering in early May the weather was dull and cool, with a noticeable lack of flying insects. It seems likely that this lack of pollinating insects at a crucial time has caused the lack of fruit being set.

A recent visit to Wisley confirmed that it is not just our trees that have been affected; their orchard trees are also suffering a very poor fruit set this year.

Let's hope that the commercial orchards in England have fared better, else we will be importing even more apples from abroad later this year.

On a happier note, we planted 4 new fruit trees in our main orchard on the Memorial Playing Field in February. 3 of them were Sussex variety apples, making a total of 23 Sussex apple varieties in our collection. Huge thanks to tree donors Alan, Annie, Liz and Pamela.

We plan to plant 4 more trees next February, at which point, we will have filled all the space allocated to us by the Parish Council, and this orchard will be full.

We will have planted 54 new trees here, adding to the 7 remaining trees from the old orchard that was here from the 1930s onwards until ravaged by the 1987 hurricane, when most of

the old trees perished.

We also planted 3 new trees on the Abbey Road Orchard. There are now 6 trees there - so officially an 'Orchard'! Many thanks to tree donors Chris and Pat, Sheila, Leslie and family.

We now graft our own trees using cuttings from the trees growing on our orchards. As well as growing trees for our own orchards, we have taken several orders for specific variety trees from other local orchards.

We have a small stock of 1 and 2 year old trees that we can offer for sale. If you are interested, please email us on [steyningorchard@gmail.com](mailto:steyningorchard@gmail.com) and we will send you our stock list. Many of these are local Sussex varieties, so as well as supporting our Community Orchard you will be helping to preserve these lovely local heritage varieties. These are priced at £25 each and we will deliver locally.

We get many questions and requests for memorial trees in our orchards. Whilst we have been able to accommodate over 50 peoples' wishes for a tree, we now have a waiting list longer than the number of trees we expect to be able to plant in future. So, unless we can find more space for more trees, we have had to close our waiting lists.

**If anyone knows of any suitable space, do let us know. [steyningorchard@gmail.com](mailto:steyningorchard@gmail.com).**



## Introducing recently-elected District Councillors for Steyning and Ashurst.

Hello – we are Victoria Finnegan and Nick Marks, your recently-elected District Councillors for Steyning and Ashurst.

We were delighted to have been chosen to represent the ward in the recent elections and will do our best over the next four years to help all residents to make the area a nicer place to live.

This of course means many different things to different people, so we would like to hear from residents of all ages who have concerns, complaints or, better still, ideas about local issues.

As you may know, the Parish, District and County Councils all have different areas of responsibility; to make things as clear as possible here are the things that we, as your District Councillors, can help you with:

**Community and Wellbeing** – including community transport, debt advice, voluntary sector grants and young people's services.

**Local Business** – including small business funding, skills training and licensing.

**Parking** - including car parks and parking enforcement.

**Parks and Countryside** – including sports facilities, grass cutting and dog fouling.

**Planning and Development** – including planning applications, the Local Plan, and conservation.

**Recycling and Waste** – including bin collection and fly tipping.

This is just an overview of the main things we take responsibility for. If in doubt just contact us anyway and we'll do what we can to either help you directly or point you in the direction of the right people.

**You can contact us at any time:**

[Nicholas.Marks@horsham.gov.uk](mailto:Nicholas.Marks@horsham.gov.uk) or 07854 603523

[Victoria.Finnegan@horsham.gov.uk](mailto:Victoria.Finnegan@horsham.gov.uk) or 07742100252

And via our Facebook page 'Steyning & Ashurst – Horsham District Councillors'.

Even better, come and find us at our stall at Steyning Farmers' Market on the first Saturday of every month.

We'd be really happy to meet you and have a chat about any topics you'd like to bring up.

*Thanks, Victoria and Nick.*





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## How much?

Having recently returned from an exotic trip to Azerbaijan, I thought I'd share some interesting elements of their mortgage market that I discovered whilst there.

The normal process for the indigenous population of Azerbaijan when buying, is to first purchase a plot of land where you wish to build your home.

There are lots of empty, walled plots on display some with decorative gates, visible when driving through outlying towns and villages awaiting some future build date.

The reason this is done is because it secures the plot where you want to live and when finances are in place (which can take years depending on circumstances) building can commence.

Quite often this is done in stages, partly because it is when personal funds are available but mainly as the culture in Azerbaijan is for family's to live together and grow together in their home.

So, even when a property has been built and is lived in, it generally appears a work in progress awaiting future growth of the family.

For properties that are personally built already or by developers, these tend to be on a leasehold arrangement similar to here in the UK.

These when I took a brief look at 2 and 3 bedroom apartments, can vary in price from £70,000 to over £700,000 despite being just streets apart!

Azerbaijan is an up and coming nation so watch this space!



The most staggering fact I established whilst there, is that dependent on the mortgage term a customer takes, rates can be as high as 30% so significantly more than here at home!

So, spare a thought for anyone wanting to buy a home in Azerbaijan and I hope that softens the impact of continued rate rises here.

**To discuss any aspect of mortgages, please feel free to call the team here at Compass Mortgages.**



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## July: Diary Events

The following nonrecurring events are also in the What's On section on the Your Steyning, Bramber & Beeding website at: [www.yourmag.co.uk](http://www.yourmag.co.uk) NOTE: Post nonrecurring events before 10<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to the print month. [roger@barawood.co.uk](mailto:roger@barawood.co.uk)

### Sunday 2nd July Greening Steyning

13:00 – 16:00

Steyning, Bramber and Upper Beeding

### Give Your Stuff Away Day

Your junk could be someone else's treasure! Give Your Stuff Away Day is a great way of passing on those items that you no longer need, but which someone else would love. Just leave unwanted items in a neat pile outside your home from 13:00-16:00 so others can wander round and pick them up. Photographing your stash and putting it on social media with the hashtag #GYSAD will help people find you. A few tips – just make sure you don't block the pavement, and don't forget to take stuff back in at the end of the day.

### Wednesday 5th July Community Film Night

19:30 – 22:00

Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

### Screening: A Man Called Otto

A Man Called Otto tells the story of Otto Anderson (Tom Hanks), a grumpy widower whose only joy comes from criticizing and judging his exasperated neighbours. When a lively young family moves in next door, he meets his match in quick-witted and very pregnant Marisol, leading to an unexpected friendship that will turn his world upside-down.

### Friday 7th July Henfield Theatre Company

18:00 – 22:15

Sussex Prairie Garden, Morlands Farm, Wheatsheaf Rd, Henfield BN5 9AT

### A Midsummer Night's Dream

Our next summer production, will be an open-air production of Shakespeare's best loved comedy, A Midsummer Night's Dream. Our sincere thanks to Paul and Pauline McBride for this wonderful opportunity and for allowing us into their Garden. Kindly sponsored by Andy Blunden Ceramic Wall & Floor Tilers Ltd.,

performances are on 7th, 8th and 9th July at 19:30. Tickets costing £17.50 per person are now on sale via [www.henfieldtheatrecompany.com](http://www.henfieldtheatrecompany.com), and at Steven's Estate Agents in Henfield High Street. The ticket price also provides entry to the gardens from 18:00 (normal single day entry fee to the gardens is £10). Why not bring a picnic and have time to enjoy the beautiful surroundings? Tea, coffee, cake and ice-cream will be available. Numbered seating provided for the performances. **And don't forget a cushion and a torch!**

### Saturday 8th July Greening Steyning

14:00 – 16:00

Beeding & Bramber Village Hall

### BN44 Repair Cafe

Don't bin it - let us help you fix it! Bring along your items to repair, and anything you'd like sharpened. You can also speak to one of our Helpdesk volunteers about how to save energy at home.

### Saturday 8th July Cantatrice

15:00 – 16:00

Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

### Tea, Cakes, Songs and Poems

Come and have a cuppa at 14:30 then stay and hear a mixed programme from our recent competitions and lighter stuff about tea and cakes to include 'A Spoonful of Sugar' 'Lollipop' & 'When I take my sugar to tea' plus some great poems. TICKETS only £8 adults - under 18yrs FREE (missing from poster) but they must have a ticket so ask for one when you visit The Steyning Bookshop. Online sales at [www.cantatrice.co.uk](http://www.cantatrice.co.uk) will accommodate under 18yrs as well. Space limited - Book early!

### Monday 10th July The Arts Society Steyning

10:00 – 12:00

Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning  
July Talk: The English Country Church - How to Read the Architectural & Liturgical Features

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## WEBSITE COMING SOON

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A talk by Nicholas Henderson. It is possible to 'read' the passage of time, of movements, cultures and peoples in the architecture and art forms evident in many of our older English country churches. This lecture takes us from the pre-Christian era through the arrival of the Romans and onwards to the sixteenth century and the epoch changing Tudors. Nicholas illustrates through his extensive research the great social changes that took place over the centuries and gives simple indicators to identify churches with Roman and Saxon origins. A graduate of Selwyn College, Cambridge, Nicholas trained for the Anglican ministry at Ripon Hall, Oxford. Inspired by a period working on the staff of Coventry Cathedral he has gained a wide experience of international matters. He lectures regularly and currently works as a parish priest in West London. Free to members; visitors £10 donation. [steyning@theartssociety.org](mailto:steyning@theartssociety.org)  
[www.theartssocietysteyning.org.uk](http://www.theartssocietysteyning.org.uk)

**Friday 14th July**  
**Steyning Downland Scheme**  
**17:00 – 18:30**

Downland Orchard / SDS Wild Play Area.  
(Nearest postcode: BN44 3LN)

#### Botany Survey (July)

Join the Steyning Downland Scheme as we continue our annual plant survey of the Rifle Range and Steyning Coombe. Both these fields are filled with all sorts of classic downland wild flowers with wonderful old names such as '*Bird's-foot Trefoil*' and '*Squinancywort*! All botanical abilities, from newbie to experienced botanists are very welcome. You will be given a free identification guide to keep, which shows all the plants we will be looking for. To book: <https://steyningdownland.org/events/>

**Saturday 15th July**  
**Steyning Downland Scheme**  
**08:00 – 09:00**

SDS Gateway, off Mouse Lane (nearest postcode: BN44 3LQ)

#### Mothy Breakfast

What do '*Angle Shades*, '*Flame Carpet* and '*Red Underwing*' have in common? They're all species of moth that we hope to be able to see during this event! Join moth expert Kat Dahl to discover these and some of the other amazing moths that fly around the Steyning Downland

Scheme during the night. To book: <https://steyningdownland.org/events/>

**Saturday 15th July**  
**Steyning Camera Club**  
**10:30 – 16:30**

Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

#### 'People, Places and Polar Bears' - a major photographic exhibition

A major exhibition of images to celebrate our club's 50th anniversary. The theme is about the importance of photography in our lives - preserving memories of people you've known, the places you've visited and the amazing things you've done in your lives. Photography is also about physical activity and enhancing your mental health in creating images you'd be proud to see on your wall. We also have a display of images which were awarded the photographer a Fellowship of the Royal Photographic Society - the highest award they give and is a top international standard. You'll also see the longest print you may have seen - a 12 metre long image! Other exhibits include audio-visual displays. There will be refreshments and a tombola. Entrance FREE.

**Monday 24th July**  
**Steyning Downland Scheme**  
**09:00 – 17:00**

Rifle Range Targets at the west end of the Rifle Range, Steyning.

#### Big Dig at the Targets

During the week of 24-28 July the Steyning Downland Scheme will be carrying out a careful excavation of the targets area at the far end of the Rifle Range. The aim is to learn more about how the Rifle Range was used over the years. Everyone is welcome to visit to see what we are up to! The dig is being led by SDS volunteer Justin Russell, a qualified archaeologist with specialist knowledge of rifle ranges. Free but donations welcome! To book: <https://steyningdownland.org/events/>

**Wednesday 26th July**  
**Steyning and District Flower Club**  
**19:30 – 21:30**

Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning  
**"How Bizarre" with Graham King**

This month the Club is welcoming Graham King who is a popular, innovative Surrey Area NAFAS Tutor and Demonstrator of crafts and



**Cantatrice**  
conductor Zoe Peate  
accompanist Gary Prior

**Tea, Cakes & Poems**

**Saturday 8 July**  
**3.00-4.00pm**  
**Steyning Centre**

**tickets £8.00**  
**www.cantatrice.co.uk**  
**The Steyning Bookshop**  
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**Tea served from 2.30pm**  
**Under 18 FREE with ticket**



floral designs. Visitors are warmly welcomed to come and join the club members for an evening of floral entertainment. Refreshments available along with a raffle of Graham's creations. Visitors £6. Doors open at 19:00.

**Saturday 29th July**  
10:00 – 20:00  
Bramber

### Bramber 950

Bramber Castle and St Nicholas church were both completed in 1073 which means that they are both 950 years old this year. Few villages have such ancient buildings and this is an opportunity to celebrate them and discover more about them. Perhaps you have lived in Bramber or a nearby village for many years but have never found the time to explore these local gems. Now is the time. Pick and choose all or any event.

**10:00-** A service of celebration in St Nicholas church.

**11:00-** A history walk, starting at the castle and going to St Botolphs church.

**13:00 – 15:00-** Lunch. Free time to perhaps picnic in the castle grounds where there will be a few activities for children.

**14:00 – 17:00-** Visit St Mary's House and Gardens (last entry 16:30). The House was built around 1470 and has links to the Knights Templar. Entry is **free on the 29th** (selected areas of the House and Garden open only). There are extensive gardens and the tea room will be open on the day.

**19:00 – 20:00-** At St Nicholas church. Celebrating 950 years through music and poetry, from Anglo-Saxon times until today.

**Wednesday 2nd August**  
Steyning Parish Council - Community Film Night  
19:30 – 22:00  
Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

### Screening: Ticket to Paradise

George Clooney and Julia Roberts star in this romantic comedy from the director of Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again, following a divorced couple who team up and travel to Bali to stop their daughter from making the same mistake they think they made 25 years ago. Tickets are on sale at the Steyning Centre at £6.00 each and include tea or coffee during the interval.

Wine can be purchased at £2.50 per glass. Doors open at 19:00 for a 19:30 start.

**Thursday 3rd August**  
Steyning Downland Scheme  
20:30 – 22:00

SDS Gateway, off Mouse Lane (nearest postcode: BN44 3LQ)

### Bat Safari

Join professional ecologist Holly Harkness for a summer bat evening, discovering the extraordinary lifestyles of the bats that live on the Steyning Downland Scheme. To book: <https://steyningdownland.org/events/>

**Saturday 5th August**  
3Bs Churchs  
14:00 – 17:00

The Rectory Garden, Church Lane, Upper Beeding

### 3Bs Church Summer Fête

BBQ -Bouncy Castle - Face painting - Local stall holders. Lots of kids activists and games (free)



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## Steyning Primary School PE teacher Mr Knowles Retires!

After an amazing 23 years at Steyning Primary School, Mr Knowles is retiring! Mr Knowles is widely known as the most enthusiastic supporting PE teacher in Steyning! Joe Wicks has nothing on him!

After working within the special support centre at SPS for 6 years Mr Knowles took up the role of running Area Sport in 2017 and has made a huge impact on 100's of children ever since. His energy, positivity and devotion to the children and sport has meant that the school received a Gold Standard for sport 4 years running and with the possibility of a platinum award in the pipeline this year. Watch this space!

There are too many achievements to list them all, but these deserve a mention:

- Gold medal in the Sussex games for hockey - with some players going on to play for Sussex.
- Steyning Primary School has been awarded Sussex Champions for hockey twice which is incredible for a two-form entry school.
- Two silver medals were won for girls' football and one silver for girls' hockey.
- One bronze medal in the Tri-County Hockey in Canterbury and two further bronze medals for both hockey and netball.
- Winning the boys Area final football, qualifying for the All-Sussex finals and finishing 5th.

Steyning Primary School has entered teams into an impressive 48 tournaments a year since he started across a range of sports such as rounders, athletics, cross-country, netball, basketball and swimming across all age groups. The opportunities he has created for the children throughout his time as PE teacher has been immense and for this, we thank him dearly.

We asked him about his highlights and the ones that stood out were an impressive standing long jump score, the boys winning a silver in cross-country last year, a nail-biting penalty shoot-out by one of the girl's football teams resulting in a silver but above all, it is the sportsmanship shown between the children during every single one of the 17 sports days he has organised that always leaves him feeling the proudest. Now I wonder where the children get their sportsmanship from!

We would like to thank Mr Knowles for so many great memories, for the invaluable life-lesson taught to our children that will last a lifetime and for his ability to instil confidence and inspire. Thank you for all your motivational speeches, commitment, and energy you will be sorely missed.

You deserve a rest!

Happy retirement Mr Knowles!

**From all at Steyning Primary School, past and present.**





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Writing a Will is one of those tasks that often goes overlooked. However, the benefits of creating a Will extend far beyond just financial considerations.

A Will acts as a powerful document that can provide peace of mind to loved ones and ensures the smooth transfer of assets after you have gone. Crafting your Will enables you to have full control over the distribution of your assets after you die. By explicitly stating your wishes, you can ensure that any property, investments and personal belongings are distributed how you want.

You will often hear me coin the phrase "Your Will, Your Way!" This can prevent confusion, reduce the likelihood of disputes and it can eliminate the need for expensive legal processes.

A Will is not just about assets though, it allows you to protect your loved ones in various ways. Guardianship provisions can be included to designate who will care for children, additionally, a Will can provide some security for elderly or dependent family members who require ongoing support. There are also many options to leave financial help to the Charities closest to your heart.

The absence of a Will can leave loved ones in a difficult and emotionally challenging position. Having a roadmap in place can sometimes relieve them of the burden of making complex decisions during an already distressing time. It provides a clear set of instructions, making the estate settlement process smoother, faster, and less stressful. By avoiding intestacy laws, a Will also minimises unnecessary costs and preserves the value of the estate for your beneficiaries.

At Nsure we believe writing a Will is a responsibility that we should all embrace. Beyond the financial considerations, it allows you to take control of your legacy, protect the people who matter the most to you and alleviate difficult decisions after you have gone.



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Emma Cohen **FIPW**

In 2020, Emma became the youngest ever fellow of the Institute of Professional Willwriters, showing her dedication to the profession.



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Council

# Share your views on the District's Draft Climate Action Strategy



**We are aiming for the District to become carbon neutral by 2050 and we need your help.**

The strategy will include a 10-year action plan for the Council, our key partners, and the wider community.

“have  
your  
say”



We would like your views on the draft Strategy. These views will help to shape the final Strategy and future actions. The survey runs from 26 June to 31 August.

Get involved at  
[www.horsham.gov.uk/climateactionstrategy](http://www.horsham.gov.uk/climateactionstrategy)



Steypning  
and  
District Flower Club

Invites you  
to an evening with

# Graham King

Demonstrating his  
Floral Designs entitled

## "How Bizarre"

Wednesday  
26th July 2023  
The Steypning Centre  
Steypning BN44 3XZ  
7pm for 7.30pm

Non-Members Tickets £6 on the door

 Greetings  
ISLAND



## Stinging Nettle

In the shadows under the Oak trees my enemy awaits. There are hundreds of them, huddled together in a silent, ferocious mob. With their drab green leaves and insignificant flowers, the Stinging Nettle is a joyless plant infamous only for its ability to inflict pain.

I can almost hear these nettles straining at their roots, desperately trying to reach me because I am in possession of something they crave: a pair of bare legs. When I started writing this article, I realised that I hadn't been stung by a Stinging Nettle for so long that I had forgotten what it felt like. So, dear reader, just for you I am wading into a nettle patch in a pair of shorts.

As my legs brush the underside of the nettles' leaves, I break the fragile tips off hundreds of hollow hairs, and I'm injected with histamine, serotonin and acetylcholine, with a splash of formic acid. This volatile cocktail acts like napalm on my knees – my skin itches and blisters and that familiar fiery, tingling, pulsing pain sears up my spinal cord. The plant does not inflict this agony as some sadistic vendetta against schoolchildren and writers. The nettle's

hairy, hurtful suit of armour is a defence mechanism against hungry herbivores.

Despite our hatred for the Stinging Nettle, we have found many uses for it over the centuries as cloth, medicine, and food. Seventeenth century Sussex herbalist Nicholas Culpeper claimed nettles – which '*can be found by feeling in the darkest night*' – cured everything from nosebleeds to leprosy. Celebrity chefs extol the virtues of vitamin-packed nettle soups, risottos and spanakopita. And the caterpillars of our most impressive butterflies enjoy munching on nettles too. Red Admirals, Peacocks, Commas and Small Tortoiseshells all depend on them.

Halfway through the nettle patch all this is offering me little comfort. If I focus my mind, I can rise above it and the waves of pain can start to feel strangely invigorating. But not for long and I soon start frantically searching for a cure. Rubbing mashed dock leaves on my legs has soothed my stings since I was a schoolboy, so I was surprised to read that it's all a ruse. Scientists claim dock leaves are simply a placebo – and the searching and rubbing is just a distraction that numbs the pain.

Beyond the nettle patch I stumbled across an amazing glade of orchids, vibrant and stunning in the sunshine. In an instant the stinging stopped. Maybe it was all in my mind after all. Even when we are in our darkest night we need to keep pushing through the painful patches. There's something surprising and soothing awaiting us on the other side.

By Michael Blencowe: Learning & Engagement Officer, Sussex Wildlife Trust.  
Sussex Wildlife Trust is an independent registered charity caring for wildlife and habitats throughout Sussex. It's easy to join online at:  
[www.sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk/join](http://www.sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk/join)  
or T: 01273 497532  
Stinging Nettle Sussex Wildlife Trust 2



### Shiatsu Physical Therapist

Hello my name is Tanya Price. I have lived and worked in Steyning for 20 years qualifying from the London College of Shiatsu in 1993. Being a physical therapist is my passion as the positive difference it makes is very rewarding.

Treatment is fully clothed wearing soft flexible clothing and involves stretching, manipulation and pressure points. This is done on the floor on my futon.

Shiatsu can effectively help sciatica, hip and back problems, joint and disc stiffness, general aches and pains, lowering blood pressure, improving lymphatic drainage and giving a sense of well being.

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I am at Body Matters Steyning daily and offer Friday evening appointments.

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## Backs and Necks and a whole lot more!

Although chiropractors are best known for treating back and neck pain, which they do very well, patients also consult chiropractors regarding a range of other, related conditions. While it's true that chiropractors are experts in addressing musculoskeletal issues, their scope of practice extends way beyond the spine. They are also skilled in addressing conditions and injuries related to the extremities, such as shoulders, elbows, wrists, hips, knees, and ankles. Whether you're experiencing joint pain, stiffness, or limited range of motion in any of these areas, a chiropractor can assess and provide targeted adjustments to restore proper alignment and function.

Chiropractic is a regulated primary healthcare profession. Chiropractors are trained to diagnose, treat, manage and prevent disorders of the musculoskeletal system (bones, joints, and muscles), as well as the effects these disorders can have on the nervous system and general health.

### Chiropractors treat patients of all ages—infants, children, and adults.

Chiropractic care is not limited to adults; it can also benefit children and infants. Birth can be a traumatic experience for newborns, potentially resulting in spinal misalignments. Paediatric chiropractors specialise in gentle and safe adjustments tailored to the unique needs of young patients.

**Sports Performance:** Athletes, whether professional or recreational, often turn to chiropractic care to improve their performance and prevent injuries. Chiropractors have expertise in optimising musculoskeletal function, enhancing joint mobility, and promoting proper biomechanics. They can develop customised treatment plans that include adjustments, soft tissue therapy, and exercise recommendations to help athletes reach their full potential and reduce the risk of injuries.

### To do this there is a whole lot of training involved!

To obtain a Master of Chiropractic degree MChiro (Hons) students study a full-time course over four or five years depending on



their entry level qualifications. The course is evidence based and similar to the training of medical doctors and other regulated health professionals.

During the first 2 years of the chiropractic program, students focus on the basic sciences, such as anatomy, physiology, microbiology, and pathology. They are also fully trained on taking and reading x-rays and scans.

The final 2 years concentrates on manipulation techniques and courses in diagnosis, neurology, orthopaedics, physiological therapeutics, rehabilitation, nutrition, geriatrics, and paediatrics. During the last year of school, chiropractic students treat patients under the direction of licensed chiropractors.

Like other health professions chiropractic is regulated by an Act of Parliament. Chiropractors must register with the General Chiropractic Council and adhere to a strict code of conduct to maintain the quality and safety of patient care.

They must additionally keep up to date with developments within the profession and once qualified they have to make sure they are practicing in the best interests of themselves and their patients by broadening and deepening their knowledge through a system of Continuing Professional Development (CPD for short).

Every year chiropractors must formally log their CPD activities to show the legally required 30 hours have been completed. Without this their license is invalid.

Over the years Mark Jones from Well Adjusted Health has undertaken many different courses covering many different specialist areas but in particular neck, back, hips and knees. Most recently Mark has attended a two-day conference in London focusing on muscle and soft tissue work.

If you would like a check or to discuss how we may be able to help you call us for a FREE no obligation 15-minute assessment.

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**MARK JONES** MCHIRO, DC



## July 2023 Book Reviews

### YA / CHILDREN'S BOOKS



**Unraveller by Frances Hardinge.**  
Macmillan paperback  
£8.99

Frances Hardinge is a unique writer with astonishing world-building skills, and although her books are classified as children's / YA, the compelling,

complex fantasies she weaves transcend categorization.

Radditch is a land beset by 'Cursers'; people whose hatred has hatched a 'curse-egg' which has the power to transform humans into animals or trap them in inanimate objects. In a world where anyone can create life-destroying curses, only one person has the power to unravel them: a young lad called Kellen. He does not fully understand his talent, but uses it to help those who have been cursed, including his ally and closest friend, Nettle. But Kellen himself is cursed, and unless he and Nettle can release him, he is in danger of unravelling everything - and everyone - around him.

*A heart-wrenching, mesmerising story of revenge, redemption, trauma, healing, and the power of therapy, beautifully woven from gossamer-fine language. For readers aged 11-100!*



**Call of the Titanic by Lindsay Galvin.**  
Chicken House paperback  
£7.99

Lindsay Galvin's excellent novel Darwin's Dragons was one of our top picks in 2021, and Call of the Titanic is another brilliant story which takes a real historical event and adds a

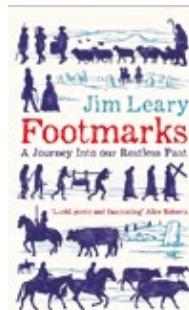
little sprinkle of magic and mythology, being inspired by the story of real-life survivor of the Titanic, Sid Daniels.

Steining Bookshop - 01903 812062  
Monday - Saturday: 9:30 - 17:30  
info@steiningbookshop.co.uk

Young cabin steward, Sid, is proud to be working on the Titanic, the greatest steam liner ever built. Meanwhile, feisty Clara stows away on a much smaller ship, the Carpathia. Here, she meets a giant bear of a dog: Rigel, who has a reputation for mischief. What none of them can foresee is how they'll need each other on the night Titanic collides with an iceberg. Or that an even more extraordinary creature might also answer their call . . .

*An exciting and original adventure perfect for readers of 8-12 years.*

### ADULT BOOKS



**FOOTMARKS by Jim Leary.**  
Icon Books, hardback  
£18.98

Looking at archaeological sites, it's easy to think of them as snapshots frozen in time, static moments fixed in place. Jim Leary's intention with this lively, accessible book is to put the life and

movement back into history, and he has his own personal reasons for doing so. He does this by looking at footprints, paths, roads, rivers, transhumance, and waves of migration to provide a compelling and very readable picture of a past world continually in motion, from the very beginnings of human history onwards.



**The Marriage Portrait by Maggie O'Farrell.** Tinder Press, paperback £9.99

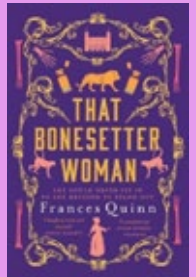
Set in Italy in the 1560's and inspired by Robert Browning's narrative poem 'My Last Duchess', this is a vividly-imagined account of the life of Lucrezia, daughter of a Renaissance prince. Lucrezia has led a sheltered life within the walls of her father's

## JULY AT THE STEYNING BOOKSHOP

**THURSDAY 27th JULY 7.30pm VENUE TBC.**

**An Evening with Frances Quinn**

Join us for a dive into the Georgian era with historical novelist FRANCES QUINN! Frances will introduce her new novel *That Bonesetter Woman*, which follows the rags to riches (and back!) story of the indomitable Durie, and her flighty actress sister - unforgettable characters based on real-life Georgian celebrities!



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grand Palazzo, until she is abruptly married off, aged 15, in a strategic alliance to Duke Alfonso. But Lucrezia soon realises that her husband does not have her best interests at heart, and she will have to summon deep reserves of resilience if she is to survive this marriage.

*O'Farrell has created a fabulously colourful world, seething with intrigue, and our journey with this young, rebellious heroine is underlaid with dark menace and peril.*

But her father thinks it's no job for a woman and Durie is sent to London to chaperone her beautiful, flighty sister Lucinda. While Lucinda dreams of fame and fortune on the stage, Durie sets up a bone-setting practice, quickly ascending to undreamt-of heights and becoming the toast of fashionable society! But what goes up must come down... Will Durie endure?

*An addictive, joyful read, filled with quirky characters and fascinating historical detail!*



**That Bonesetter Woman by Frances Quinn.** Simon & Schuster, paperback  
£9.99

All the gossip and grime of Georgian London are vividly brought to life in this warm-hearted historical novel. *That Bonesetter Woman* tells the uplifting story of clumsy, plain

Endurance (Durie) Proudfoot, who has inherited her father's gift for 'bone-setting'.

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## July: Steyning for Trees

Many thanks to those who are signing up for a tree on their verge. As you know, we hope to reach 100 trees this coming tree planting season (Oct - Mar) with our partnership with WSCC who own most of the verges in Steyning.

Their scheme guarantees future maintenance so Steyning does not have that burden. This will increase the amount of blossom here. *See the article in our last Newsletter emphasising the importance of tree blossom particularly for pollinators like bees and butterflies.* If you want a tree on your verge contact us on 01903 816726.

We have also donated a prize of a tree on your verge (actual cost now £236) to the Country Fair.

The National Trust, one of the major landowners in the UK, is working hard to restore its hedgerows and are using AI to calculate the loss.

*'Hedgerows (wildlife corridors) have decreased by 33% or the loss of 1,800 miles (nationally 50%) provide essential habitat to much of the UK's wildlife including birds, butterflies, bees and hedgehogs by connecting isolated patches of habitat.'*

*Aiming to plant four million blossoming trees by 2030 across England, Wales and Northern Ireland should boost nature throughout the year.'*



Alistair Burrows and William Somerset of Sussex Ironworks, our local blacksmiths, have completed the restoration of the recycled tree guard and it is now installed protecting the Queen's multi-stemmed birch tree at Fletcher's Croft.

**Many thanks to the Parish Council for their contribution to the cost of this.**

Steyning For Trees was delighted to receive a Certificate of Merit from The Steyning Society at their Awards Evening in recognition of our contribution to the enhancement of Steyning's environment.

**We were also pleased to be included in the article in Action in Rural Sussex's April newsletter about the Queen's Green Canopy Awards from the Lord Lieutenant.**

**We hope that this will encourage more tree and hedge planting throughout Sussex.**

## Food & Drink Festival: "Heads Up"

The 2023 Steyning & District Food & Drink Festival is on the horizon. Not with us just yet, as we would like to enjoy some summer sunshine before autumn arrives!

The Festival dates are 2nd September to 7th October 2023. Visit: [www.steyningdistrictfooddrinkfestival.co.uk](http://www.steyningdistrictfooddrinkfestival.co.uk) to find out all about the superb offers and events – book your favourite events now, before they sell out.

Mid-July onwards, the ever popular printed guides will be found in shops & eateries within our area, together with the Library, Steyning Centre, Post Office TI Point and Cobblestone Walk doorway. Lots to look forward to!



Fun last year, when the Gruffalo Tea Party took place at Cobblestone Tea.

## Front Cover: 'it's alive' - Kevin Meeten

SteyningARTS  
ART TRAILS : EVENTS : INSPIRATION

Kevin is a 59 year old artist from Ashington, and became an artist 'accidentally' about 9 years ago

While recovering from a serious illness, Kevin discovered that he could produce interesting and unusual pieces of art, enjoyed the process and began to show them locally. To his surprise, many other people liked them too. Kevin works with Steyning Arts and Horsham Artists, and recently took part in both groups Art Trails.

He has had no formal art training, therefore his work can be unconventional, and he likes to incorporate unusual materials into his true mixed-media pieces, which often include 3D features.

He mainly paints with acrylic, and a notable unique aspect of his work are the semi-abstract landscapes and cityscapes that are painted onto aluminium foil, giving them a remarkable watery sheen.

There is a level of uncontrollability to this technique that makes the final outcome 'a bit like unwrapping a present, you never know what you will get!'

Kevin's work is inspired by a lifelong passion for sci-fi cinema, TV, literature and comic books, and is produced in his studio which is lovingly referred to as the 'BatCave', where he also paints stylised portraits and technology from iconic sci-fi movies and books.

Kevin Meeten - 07763 750876  
[www.steyningarts.co.uk](http://www.steyningarts.co.uk)  
[www.horshamartists.org](http://www.horshamartists.org)  
[kevinmeeten@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:kevinmeeten@hotmail.co.uk)





## Local Clubs and Societies

To add a club or society or change the details kindly email [roger@barawood.co.uk](mailto:roger@barawood.co.uk)

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**Steyning & Ashurst Friends of St. Barnabas House.**  
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**The Friends of Steyning Parish Church.** 01903 813232

**The Steyning Society.**  
E: [cmantsteyningsoc@gmail.com](mailto:cmantsteyningsoc@gmail.com)  
com / W: [www.steyningsociety.org.uk](http://www.steyningsociety.org.uk)

**The Steyning Friends of Chestnut Tree House Children's Hospice.**  
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**The Royal British Legion Steyning & District Branch.**  
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**Steyning Bridge Club.**  
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**Steyning Camera Club.**  
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**Steyning & District Flower Club.** 01903 895939

**Steyning History Society**  
Secretary: Mrs. P. Blackie,  
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**Steyning Horticultural Society.** 01903 814049.

**Steyning Museum.**  
01903 813333.

**Steyning National Women's Register**  
01903 815577 [nwr.org.uk](http://nwr.org.uk)

**Steyning So and Sews**  
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**Sugar and Spice Sugar Craft Club.** 01903 695700.

**The Arts Society Steyning.**  
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<http://www.theartsocietysteyning.org.uk/>

**The Steyning Society.**  
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**Steyning Downland Scheme Group.** 01903 812404.

**Friends of Steyning Downland Scheme.** [www.steyningdownland.org/support-us/friends-scheme/](http://www.steyningdownland.org/support-us/friends-scheme/)

**Special Task Force.**  
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**Steyning & District U3A.**  
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## Land Grab . . . ?

Well, not quite. Thanks to the generosity of the Wiston Estate, we've been gifted with an extra 7 acres of land to add to the 165 which is already managed by the Steyning Downland Scheme.

While the rest of the nature reserve has free public access across almost all of it, this extra bit will be kept as a vital sanctuary area, where wildlife can live undisturbed.

Earlier this year, SGS students planted a hedge along the eastern boundary and this will be followed up in a few weeks by some new fencing, very kindly funded by the South Downs National Park. This means we'll be able to start conservation grazing soon - all the Dexters have been fully briefed and are standing by for action.

We have some really exciting plans for this new bit of land, but they all hang on everyone





**The Steyning Downland Young People's Sunday Conservation Group.** 07791 437790.

**The Steyning Downland Conservation Volunteers.** sdsvolunteers@gmail.com

**Volunteering in the Horsham District.** 01403 273985.

**Young People's Sunday Conservation Group.** 07791 437790.

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**Steyning Town Community Football Club.** 07713 628053.

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**HEALTH:**  
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**Know Dementia - Green Moments.** 01273 494300.

**Parkinson Support Group.**  
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**Pilates Personal Training.**  
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**Steyning Healthy Walks.**  
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**Steyning Patients Participation Group.** Health Centre, Tanyard Lane,

**YOUTH:**  
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## July 2024 Gardening Journal

Article by Alex Bell  
T: 01903 815065 M: 07866 747849

Another hot, dry and sunny summer! It's that time of year when most of the moisture has left the soil surface and your plants are having to find water deeper down. If you've planted anything this year, then your plants will need a little extra help to get established. So, don't forget to water and feed - I always find a thorough soaking as opposed to little and often is always best - the water permeates deeper into the soil encouraging the roots to follow.

Plant of the month – *Hydrangea arborescens* 'Strong Annabelle'

As its name suggests, *Hydrangea arborescens* 'Strong Annabelle' is a sturdier cultivar of the well-loved 'Hydrangea 'Annabelle'. The enormous, rounded heads of white florets stand proud on the strong stems of this deciduous shrub, even in exposed positions. Unlike many *Hydrangea arborescens* varieties, this well branched *Hydrangea* rarely flops due to its well branched, compact growth habit.

'Strong Annabelle' has glorious bundles of white flowers that will also get larger as the plant grows older, but even when they are still quite young, they will put on a dazzling and long-lasting display from mid-summer onwards. The flower heads are probably the largest hydrangea flowers in the world - up to 30cm across!

These extra strong hydrangea plants are

tolerant of all the wind and rain that a British summer can throw at them, which is also very handy. The amazing flowers open lime green, gradually turn to pure white and then fade back to shades of green as they mature. If you like flowers for the house, then these will make astonishing cut flowers too. Unlike many *Hydrangeas*, it'll also carry blooms on fresh season growth, made the same year, so you can be enjoying lots of blooms sooner than you think.

You can create high impact in the modern garden with these summer snowballs. This cool white variety produces a magical winter seed head. In autumn, Annabelle will show a spectrum of colour. The creamy white flowers will blend to pale lime and finally bright green, while the foliage turns from green to yellow. A winner of the RHS Award of Garden Merit, this variety only grows to 1.5m tall, making it the perfect subject for growing in pots and containers.



Plant of the month – *Hydrangea arborescens* 'Strong Annabelle'

Make sure that the hydrangea receives lots of water when the summer comes, especially if freshly planted. All *Hydrangea* need at least 3 years of watering through the summer to establish well until they finally find enough resources to look after themselves. *Hydrangeas* are very low maintenance and will need little pruning, which can be done in spring as new shoots appear. The old shoots should be left in the winter and not removed until spring.

*Hydrangeas* can be grown in fertile, well-drained soil and often prefer a shady location. One of my favourite combinations is with an underplanting of *Hachenochloa macra*, a small Japanese grass which provides the perfect spiky contrast to the big leaves of the *Hydrangea* – simple but classy!

### Jobs to be Done July:

#### Ornamental Garden:

- Continue to deadhead herbaceous perennials and roses as flowers go over.
- Weed!!!
- Continue to edge borders.

- Cutback oriental poppies once flowered.
- Divide bearded irises if flowering is declining – re plant the youngest rhizomes.
- Deadhead roses.
- Trim evergreen hedges.
- Turn compost heaps.
- Cut back spent flowers of climbing hydrangea.
- Feed dahlias / cannas etc.
- Take cuttings of clematis.
- Sow biennials.

### Vegetable Garden:

- Thin dessert apples and cooking apples.
- Sow spring cabbages and plant out winter cabbages.
- Water courgettes consistently to encourage a good crop.
- Mulch long term crops like brassicas
- Water fruit trees / bushes.

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## Betsy's Family: Struggles and Sorrows

Betsy Weekes came into Steyning's story almost by chance. In 1865 she married Charles Woolgar who had learnt his trade as a wheelwright in Bramber before setting up his own wheelwright's workshop on the edge of Fletcher's Croft, a business which in due course was handed on to his son and grandson. But, it is what Betsy brought with her that is so intriguing: it was a cache of 21 letters which she and her sister Kate had received from other members of her family who had emigrated to the States to try their luck.

Harry, her oldest brother, who had been an ostler at the Queen's Head in Hurst Green, was the first to go. He set off in 1853 at the age of twenty and before long moved over to Chicago which he describes as being *'in the weasten countries'*. His letters are difficult to read because his spelling was wayward and his handwriting erratic and he also wrote across earlier lines. He must have been a little lonely because he is constantly asking about his friends and trying to encourage his father and his brothers to join him, saying *'I am dowing verry well great deal batter than if I was a home or als I thing sow. I could have don much batter if I had a trade.'* In this and elsewhere you can almost hear the old Sussex accent. His *'better', 'letter'* and *'tell'* always get written with an *'a'* rather than an *'e'*.

Back home Harry's father, Samuel was a farm labourer, and his mother was in menial service. One sister, Kate, had married a one-armed shoemaker and was busy producing a string of grandchildren and Betsy, aged 14 at that time, was also in service. One letter from the States told her she shouldn't *'be the slave to ungrateful people'*.



Betsy Woolgar

These were tough roles in life, so it is not too surprising that, in 1858, Samuel was eventually persuaded to join his oldest son, Harry, in the States together with his two youngest sons – Tom aged 16 and Ned 13. Off they went, enduring a cramped crossing from London to New York which took 51 days. The women of the family stayed behind along with one other brother who was clearly much loved but appears to have had learning difficulties.

There was a good deal of hardship. *'Tis hard to save money hear'* one said. They nevertheless put pressure on the rest of the family to join them in the States and tried, a bit unsuccessfully we suspect, to find money to send back home.

Even after six years Ned, the youngest, was explaining that *'I get \$4 dollars per week at my trade (carpentering apprentice) which is 16 shillings English; I pay 12 shillings a week for board and have only 4 left.'* One year, when times were tough in Chicago, Samuel and Harry went 700 miles south to seek work on the building of a levee on the banks of the Mississippi

and Tom also found work outside the city, but there caught an ague and *'was very ill about a month, pale as a ghost and thin as a match'* whilst Ned, aged 15 and suffering from rheumatism, was left behind in Chicago.

Then, in 1864, Betsy heard from Ned *'I have sad news to tell you of Tom's death from smallpox. His last words to me were to meet me at Church. He had ever obeyed the last injunction of Mother which was to go to Church once a day.'*

Harry had fitted in rather better to the American way of life and had made the most of the opportunities provided by the Civil War. *'He has left the army'* wrote Ned *'but is still in government employment. He gets 35 dollars a month and board which is about £7 English money. He has left the place where he was and gone further into the enemy country. He is in no danger when there is a battle for he is in the rear. His business is to help the cavalry horses.'*

Three years later however, in 1866, bad news filtered through. *'I am afraid poor Harry is gone, is gone;'* wrote his father. *'Ned wrote to Springfield. His letter was returned. On the back of it was written thus 'Harry Weekes was shot by bush stackers (bushwhackers? – marauding gangs)'. Am afraid it is true. [He] had [a] four horse team of his own. If he is gone all is also.'*

All might then have settled down, but in 1871 a major conflagration in Chicago which lasted three days burnt some 300 people to death including, sadly, young Ned. Samuel, however, escaped the fire and returned to England.

And Betsy? She preserved no more letters. They will have been written, but those fresh accounts of the early struggles and sorrows of Samuel, Harry, Tom and Ned in the States which made them worth keeping, were a thing of the past.

Article by: Chris Tod - Steyning Museum.



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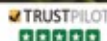
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